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A southbound 34th Avenue car has tangled with a semi on 23rd Avenue S, at 36th Street, one of the quieter streets in town. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo.

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The Minnesota Streetcar Museum operates the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line in Minneapolis and the Excelsior Streetcar Line in Excelsior. Its mission is to preserve Minnesota's electric railway heritage.

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Accidents

-Aaron Isaacs

Running a transit system is hard enough when everything goes right. However, the combination of human fallibility, mechanical failure and just bad luck means that accidents will happen.

In our collection are reports summarizing accidents for the years 1927-1940, so we can see how bad it was. As the TCRT system grew bigger and the number of automobiles exploded, there were many more opportunities to collide with something, yet the frequency of most accidents went down. It's interesting to speculate why. TCRT divided them into 16 categories.

1. Car off track
2. Collision auto
3. Collision streetcar (presumably with another streetcar)
4. Collision person
5. Collision vehicles (probably non-auto vehicles)
6. Damaged clothing
7. Disturbance
8. Ejectments (the crew throws someone off the streetcar)
9. Electrical damage
10. Employees injured
11. Fall boarding/alighting
12. Fell on board
13. Gates (probably means a person was caught in the closing gates)
14. Miscellaneous
15. Stones (probably thrown at streetcar)
16. Trouble account fare (fare disputes, generally assaults on crew members)



Let's take them one at a time.

1. Car off track
Over the reporting period, TCRT averaged 218 derailments per year.

Front cover: This issue takes a look at streetcar accidents. On August 3, 1944 motorette Janet Erickson was approaching the end of the Johnson Street line at 33rd Avenue NE when her streetcar suddenly derailed. It lurched to the left and, according to the St. Paul Dispatch, "crashed into the front of a small store, caromed off into a trolley wire pole and came to rest without injuring anyone. Erickson stuck to her controls and managed to stop the car. Then she was forced to sit down and rest to overcome the shock...It required two streetcars to pull the wreck back onto the rails." It was later reported that boys had placed rocks in the track switch frog, causing the derailment. St. Paul Dispatch photo.

However, there was a clear downward trend, from 458 in 1927 (more than one per day) to only 99 in 1939. There was a reduction in car miles of 28 percent during that period, but derailments declined at a faster rate. Why is open to speculation, but it may have been caused by the installation of electric powered track switches in the 1920s. Before that when switches were manually turned there was more room for human error, specifically leaving a switch slightly open, causing the streetcar to split it. Electric switches were more likely to open and close solidly and stay that way.

2. Collision auto

By 1927 autos were present in large numbers, traffic was starting to be a problem and the public was still learning how to drive. That year there were an astounding 7188 streetcar-auto accidents. That's an average of 20 per day. The numbers show a pretty steady downward trend to 1940, when there were 4266, or 12 per day, still very high. So what changed? During the 1930s the number of auto-owning households remained steady at about 45 percent. I think the big improvement was caused by improved traffic control. In the 1920s, aside from the occasional major intersection with a

traffic cop, there was no traffic control at all. No stop signs, no traffic signals. They were gradually installed where busy streets crossed.

It was a long time before simple stop signs were placed on residential streets where they intersected arterials. I base that on a vintage movie in our collection. We're riding a 4th Avenue car south of Lake Street. As the motorman approaches each intersection he scans left and right before crossing it, as if there is no stop sign.

3. Collision streetcar (presumably with another streetcar)

1927, 1928 and 1929 saw 133, 125

and 125 streetcar-on-streetcar collisions. In 1930 the number dropped dramatically to 73 and continued to decline to 39 in 1939. There were fewer streetcars, but I think the real reason is that turnover among motormen declined. Anyone who had a job when the Great Depression hit held onto it, and that caused skill levels to increase.

4. Collision person

This number bounced around between a low of 79 in 1931 and a high of 115 in 1936, so there doesn't seem to be much cause and effect to determine.

5. Collision vehicles (probably non-auto vehicles)

This number declined dramatically from 187 in 1927 to a low of 12 in 1938, then 21 in 1940. The causes were probably the same as for auto collisions, perhaps with the addition of better drivers (that Depression effect again) and trucks that were easier to drive.

6. Damaged clothing

This number actually increased from once daily to twice daily from 1927 to 1940, but certainly no surprise when carrying about 350,000 daily passengers.

7. Disturbance

8. Ejectments (the crew throws someone off the streetcar)

These two categories seem to go together. Disturbances dropped by half and ejectments (2 per 3 days in 1927) dropped by more than 2/3 once the Depression hit. TCRT got rid of a large number of their conductors in the early 1930s. A two-person crew was much more likely to eject an unruly passenger than a motorman working alone, and that probably explains the drop.



Museum visitors often ask "Is that a cow catcher?" "No," we answer. "It's a people catcher, designed to keep you from being run over." Here's a case in point from 1951. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

9. Electrical damage

It's unclear exactly what they meant by electrical damage, but the annual number improved from 185 in 1928 to 73 in 1938. That corresponds to TCRT's rebuilding of its fleet in the early 1930s, along with retiring all the oldest cars.

10. Employees injured

The number dropped from twice daily to once daily. Once again, better traffic control, a more experienced work force and fewer streetcars probably all contributed to this decline.

11. Fall boarding/alighting

12. Fell on board

Falling accidents have always been the most common transit injuries. As we know from running streetcars ourselves, that first step up from the ground is a big one. Also, the small step from the platform into the main car body fools some people. Between these two categories TCRT experienced about 8 falling accidents per day in 1927-29. By 1934 that number dropped to 3 per day and stayed steady for the rest of the 1930s. The decline coincides with the conversion of most of the fleet from 2-man cars with rear wire gates to the configuration of car 1300 with air-operated folding doors front and rear, plus the retirement of all the older gate cars. As long as conflicting streams of passengers were simultaneously boarding and alighting through the rear vestibule, the chances of a falling accident increased.

13. Gates (probably means a person was caught in the closing gates)

This number declined from a high of 542 in 1928 to 279 in 1940. Fewer gate cars meant fewer opportunities to get caught in the gates.

14. Miscellaneous

We don't know what was included in this category, but it declined from a high of 4059 in 1929 to 1110 in 1940.

15. Stones (probably thrown at streetcar)

Vandalism never seems to go away and the stoning of streetcars averaged 65 per year, never going up or down much.

16. Trouble account fare (fare disputes, generally assaults on crew members)

Fare disputes dropped dramatically, coinciding exactly with the elimination of most of the conductors.

Fatalities

Nowadays we are appalled when the light rail strikes and kills a pedestrian. Check out these numbers from 1927-1940. It's a pretty shocking body count, although the numbers improved in the end. Once again, better traffic control and a more seasoned motorman workforce probably were factors.

TCRT Fatalities 1927-1940

| Year | Pass. | Employee | Other | Total |
|------|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| 1927 | 1 | | 10 | 11 |
| 1928 | 1 | | 24 | 25 |
| 1929 | 1 | | 8 | 9 |
| 1930 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 9 |
| 1931 | 1 | | 13 | 14 |
| 1932 | 3 | | 8 | 11 |
| 1933 | 1 | 1 | 14 | 16 |
| 1934 | 1 | 2 | 19 | 22 |
| 1935 | | | 14 | 14 |
| 1936 | 1 | | 15 | 16 |
| 1937 | 1 | | 7 | 8 |
| 1938 | 1 | | 13 | 14 |
| 1939 | 1 | | 4 | 5 |
| 1940 | 1 | | 3 | 4 |

Regarding employee and passenger fatalities--the streetcar outweighed

every other vehicle on the street and usually emerged less worse off following collisions. However, motormen and passengers suffered injuries and probably some deaths from flying glass and wood splinters. There was no safety glass in the wood cars.

Photos of bloody streetcar accident victims were a newspaper staple.

It is probable that most of the employee deaths occurred at the car-houses and shops where there was the potential for numerous unexpected car movements plus industrial injuries.



Arguably the worst crash in company history was this 1936 head-on collision on the Hazel Park-Mahtomedi line. It happened on the bridge over the Omaha railroad. The line was double track, but it narrowed to one track to cross the bridge and it was a blind approach in both directions. Cars 1610 and 1629 were towed to Snelling Shops and scrapped. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photo.

An accident gallery

Right: In 1946 two cars sideswiped at 7th and Broadway on the east edge of downtown.

Below left: According to the newspaper account, an overheated resistor set car 1507 on fire at University and Lexington. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photo.

Below right: Derailments were frequently made worse when the streetcar also collided with trees and streetside poles. This is 1946 on Rondo at St. Albans.

All St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photos.





Above: In 1946 an eastbound Como-Harriet car derailed and hit a tree at Como and Elfelt. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photo.

Above right: One Interurban rear ended another in 1943 on University Avenue near the Minnesota Transfer underpass. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photo.

Right: A southbound Chicago-Fremont car has derailed on a switch at the complex junction of Broadway and Emerson, and has collided head-on with a northbound car. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo.



TCRT baggage service

Starting in 1905, TCRT ran a twice daily baggage-only streetcar from the downtown Minneapolis ticket office at 6th & Hennepin to Lake Minnetonka. In the course of each round trip it made side trips up the Deephaven branch and the short branch into downtown Hopkins. At Excelsior baggage was transferred between the baggage car and the express boats, allowing it to travel to any point on the lake. The service ended in 1923.

What follows is the text of the company's official instructions on baggage handling to its employees. In the dictatorial management style of the times, there is a rule for every possible contingency and an overkill approach to documentation and preventing mistakes. It's tedious reading, but gives a good feel for the era.

Baggage will be handled on the Hopkins, Excelsior, Tonka Bay and Deephaven lines of the Minneapolis & St. Paul Suburban Railroad Co. and on the boats of The Minnetonka & White Bear Navigation Co. subject to the following rules:

Baggage car serving all stations on the Hopkins, Excelsior, Tonka Bay and Deephaven lines will be operated in accordance with printed schedules.

Baggage from any port reached by the boats of The Minnetonka & White Bear Navigation Co. to any other point reached by said boats will be transported entirely by water.

Baggage from ports reached by boats of The Minnetonka & White Bear Navigation Co. to stations served by the Hopkins, Excelsior, Tonka Bay and Deephaven lines of The Minneapolis & St. Paul

Suburban Railroad Co. will be transported by water to Excelsior and thence by rail to destination.

Baggage will be checked only upon presentation of proper ticket covering

| BAGGAGE SERVICE—RAIL LINES | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------|-------|
| * Daily | | | † Except Sunday | | |
| AM. | PM. | | | AM. | PM. |
| *8:48 | †2:33 | Lv. MINNEAPOLIS | Ar. | *11:26 | †6:28 |
| 9:05 | 2:50 | Ar. Lake Harriet | Lv. | 11:08 | 6:10 |
| 9:10 | 2:55 | " Grimes | " | 11:03 | 6:05 |
| 9:11 | 2:56 | " Browndale | " | 11:02 | 6:04 |
| 9:12 | 2:57 | " Brookside | " | 11:01 | 6:03 |
| 9:14 | 2:59 | " Mendelssohn | " | 10:59 | 6:01 |
| 9:15 | 3:00 | " Hopkins Sub Sta. | " | 10:58 | 6:00 |
| 9:16 | 3:01 | " 9th Ave. | " | 10:57 | 5:59 |
| 9:17 | 3:02 | " Deephaven Jct. | " | 10:56 | ..... |
| 9:20 | 3:05 | " Glen Lake | " | 10:53 | 4:53 |
| 9:23 | 3:08 | " Clearspring | " | 10:50 | 4:50 |
| 9:25 | 3:10 | " Vine Hill | " | 10:48 | 4:48 |
| 9:27 | 3:12 | " Christmas Lake | " | 10:46 | 4:46 |
| 9:28 | 3:13 | Ar. EXCELSIOR | Lv. | 10:45 | 4:45 |
| 9:43 | 3:43 | Lv. STATION | Ar. | 10:45 | 4:45 |
| 9:48 | 3:48 | Ar. Manitou | Lv. | 10:40 | 4:40 |
| 9:50 | 3:50 | " Crescent Beach | " | 10:38 | 4:38 |
| 9:51 | 3:51 | " Wildhurst | " | 10:37 | 4:37 |
| *9:55 | 3:55 | " TONKA BAY | " | *10:33 | 4:33 |
| ..... | 5:05 | " Hopkins-Excel'r Av. | " | ..... | ..... |
| ..... | 5:10 | " Deephaven Jct. | " | ..... | 5:58 |
| ..... | 5:12 | " Baker | " | ..... | 5:56 |
| ..... | 5:15 | " Boulevard | " | ..... | 5:53 |
| ..... | 5:18 | " Groveland | " | ..... | 5:50 |
| ..... | 5:20 | " Breezy Point | " | ..... | 5:48 |
| ..... | 5:21 | " Northome | " | ..... | 5:47 |
| ..... | †5:23 | Ar. DEEPAHVEN | Lv. | ..... | †5:45 |

| BAGGAGE SERVICE—BOAT LINES | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------|--------------------|---------------|-------|------|
| Daily | | | Except Sunday | | |
| AM. | PM. | | | AM. | PM. |
| 8:48 | 2:33 | Lv. MINNEAPOLIS | Ar. | 11:26 | 6:28 |
| 10:18 | 4:18 | Ar. Meadville | Lv. | 9:06 | 3:06 |
| 10:23 | 4:23 | " Fairview | " | 9:03 | 3:03 |
| 10:27 | 4:27 | " Linwood | " | 8:58 | 2:58 |
| 10:38 | 4:38 | " Cottagewood | " | 8:49 | 2:49 |
| 10:58 | 4:58 | " Breezy Point | " | 8:27 | 2:27 |
| 11:05 | 5:05 | " Wayzata | " | 8:20 | 2:20 |
| 9:58 | 3:58 | " Wheeler's | " | 9:22 | 3:22 |
| 10:01 | 4:01 | " Arcola | " | 9:18 | 3:18 |
| 10:03 | 4:03 | " Minnetonka Beach | " | 9:15 | 3:15 |
| 10:09 | 3:58 | " Casco | " | 9:57 | 3:46 |
| 10:14 | 4:03 | " Isle View | " | 9:52 | 3:41 |
| 10:19 | 4:08 | " Spring Park | " | 9:47 | 3:36 |
| 10:24 | 4:13 | " Woolnough's | " | 9:42 | 3:31 |
| 10:08 | 3:57 | " Birch Bluff | " | 8:58 | 2:47 |
| 10:13 | 4:02 | " Edgewood | " | 9:53 | 3:42 |
| 11:17 | 5:06 | " Shady Island | " | 9:49 | 3:38 |
| 11:20 | 5:09 | " Woodside | " | 9:46 | 3:35 |
| 10:28 | 4:17 | Ar. Zumbra Heights | Lv. | 9:38 | 3:27 |

full passenger fare to destination.

The privilege of having baggage checked and transported shall apply to a ticket only when baggage offered for checking is presented by passenger to whom ticket belongs and who will use it to point to which the baggage is to be checked.

Baggage to be checked must be presented with proper ticket transportation to Boat Purser in the case of boats of The Minnetonka & White Bear Navigation Co. and to Ticket Agent in the case of stations where agents are maintained or to the Baggage Agent in charge of Baggage Car in the case of non-agency stations. At agency stations baggage must be presented to agent at least fifteen minutes before Baggage Car is scheduled to depart. P

The term "baggage" shall apply only to trunks, valet (*illegible*), suit cases, telescopes, satchels, hand bags or steamer bags containing wearing apparel or personal effects of the owner.

Baggage shall not be received or checked when not securely locked or strapped or otherwise firmly fastened except with the understanding that no liability shall be assumed by the transporting company or companies for loss, of articles therefrom".

Money, jewelry, negotiable paper and like valuables, liquors, fragile or perishable articles should not be enclosed in baggage to be checked. The transporting company or companies will not be responsible for such articles enclosed in baggage nor for damage caused thereto.

No one piece of baggage weighing over 250 lbs. shall be received for checking.

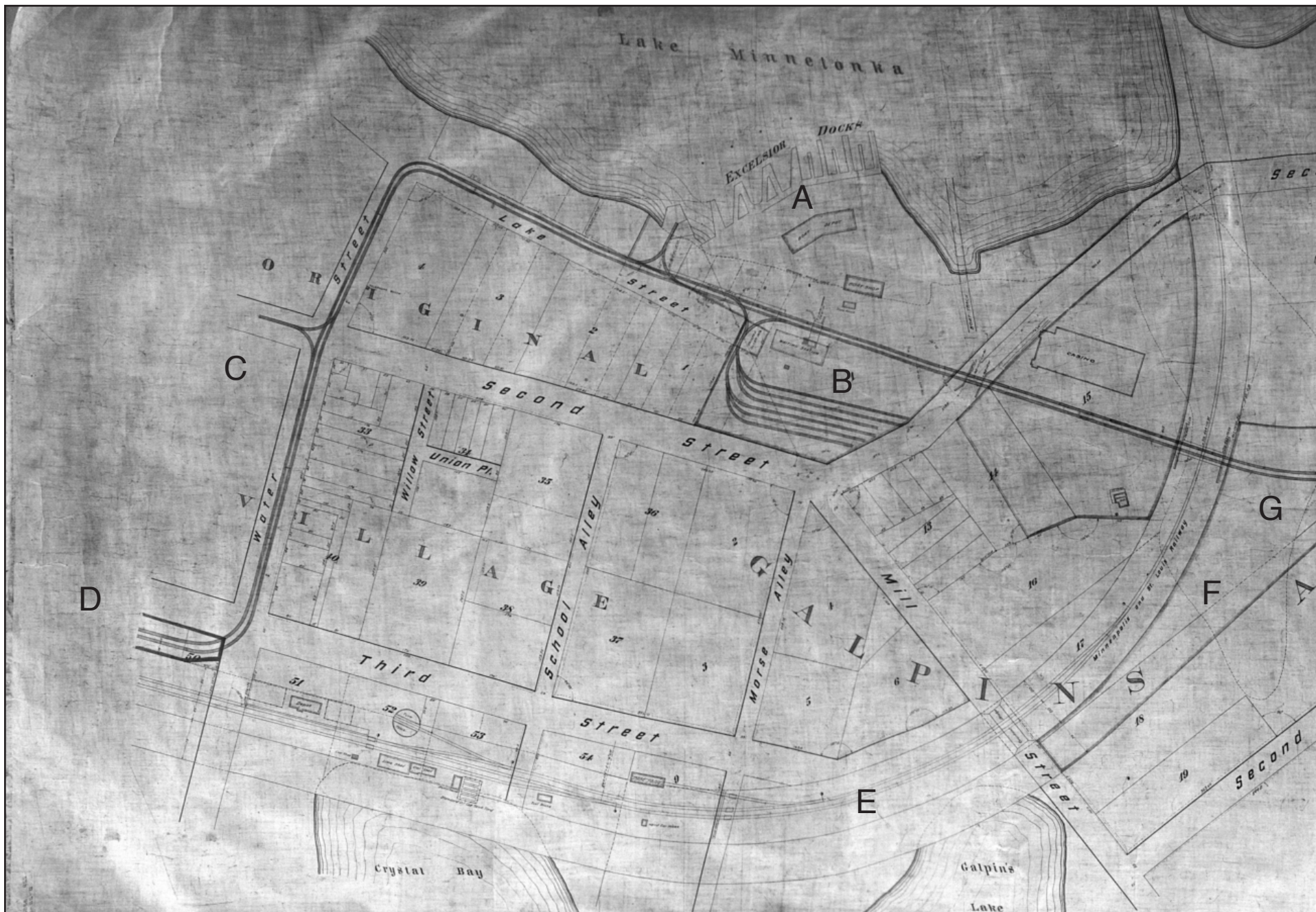
On each ticket or tickets as provided in these rules covering full passenger fare to destination not to exceed 150 lbs. of baggage shall be checked. On each additional full fare ticket transportation another 150 lbs. of baggage may be checked.

For each 100 lbs. of baggage in excess of the amount covered by ticket transportation an excess baggage charge of 10 cents shall be made. The minimum charge in such cases to be 25 cents.

Each piece of baggage for non-agency stations or ports shall be tagged with a Transit Supply Co. tag on which shall be written consignee's name and destination of the baggage as follows:

John Smith,
Glen Lake

Baggage for agency stations shall be checked with



TCRT map of Excelsior. A: The Excelsior Dock Station and express boat docks. B: The Streetcar Station and storage yard. Excelsior Excursion trains terminated here. C: The wye at Water Street and 2nd Street. Excelsior Limited trains terminated here. D: TCRT to Wildhurst dock and Tonka Bay, terminus of Lake Minnetonka trains. E: The Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad, now the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail where the Excelsior Streetcar Line now runs. F: MSM's Excelsior Streetcar Line car barn. G: TCRT to Minneapolis. Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society collection.



Above: A Lake Minnetonka car laying over at the Minneapolis ticket office on 6th Street between Hennepin and 1st Avenue N. It's carrying the white markers of an Excelsior Excursion extra.

Below: Looking across the streetcar storage yard at the Excelsior streetcar depot and, visible beyond it, the Excelsior Dock Station. Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society collection.



duplicate baggage check.

All baggage from Lake Minnetonka ports to stations on the Hopkins, Excelsior, Tonka Bay and Deephaven lines, and vice versa, shall be handled via Excelsior.

All baggage from Minneapolis destined for stations on the Hopkins, Excelsior, Tonka Bay and Deephaven Lines or for Lake Minnetonka ports shall be delivered at the Ticket Office of The Minneapolis & St. Paul Suburban Railroad Co. in Minneapolis and all baggage from the above mentioned ports or stations shall be delivered to the same place in Minneapolis, from which place consignee must have baggage removed within 24 hours after delivered. Otherwise baggage will be subject to storage charges. Consignor or his representative must personally check baggage at the Minneapolis Ticket Office for stations on the Hopkins, Excelsior, Tonka Bay and Deephaven lines or Lake Minnetonka ports. If baggage is to be picked up at some station or port where there is no agent consignor or his representative must offer the baggage to Agent on Baggage Car or to the Purser on boat, as the case may be, together with proper ticket transportation. Otherwise baggage will not be picked up.

In carrying personal baggage to non-agency stations or ports no liability will be assumed by transporting company or companies after baggage is deposited at destination. Consignee must take care of baggage immediately upon delivery at destination to protect same from damage by rains or destruction or loss or damages by any other means. After delivery of baggage at destination to which it has been checked, transporting company or companies cannot and will not agree to assume any further liability and

such baggage will be deposited at destination at sole risk of the owner.

Not more than one coupon from any one commutation book will be accepted for checking of baggage for any one trip.

When baggage is accepted for transportation on any form of ticket the Purser, Ticket Agent or Baggage Agent accepting same shall punch the ticket or tickets in the space "B C" (baggage checked) indicating that the holder of the ticket has used the baggage privilege to which he is entitled by virtue of possession of said ticket or tickets, and no further baggage shall be checked thereon.

If a patron loses his duplicate baggage check but can prove ownership of baggage by accurately describing contents, baggage shall be delivered to him after he has signed a receipt covering same.

Storage at agency stations shall be charged on each piece of baggage either inbound or outbound, checked or not checked, remaining at station over 24 hours as follows:

First 24 hours after delivery at station free

Second 24 hours after delivery 25 cents

For each succeeding 24 hours or fraction thereof 10 cents

Baggage shall be held free when received at any hour Saturday and claimed before the same hour the following Monday, or when received at any hour Sunday and claimed before midnight the following Monday. If not claimed within the time specified storage shall commence 24 hours after receipt of the baggage. Legal holidays shall be treated the same as Sundays, but no deduction shall be made for Sundays or legal holidays after the storage has commenced to run. This

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Summer Service Begins May 1

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Full "Express Boat" Service!

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 FOR TIME TABLES, FOLDERS AND FULL INFOR-
 MATION CALL AT

New Ticket Office & Waiting Room
17 NORTH SIXTH STREET.

Parcels Checked, News and Cigars. Telephone—N. 121, 2071—T. C. 3123.
 MR. B. L. SACRE, City Ticket Agent.



shall apply to all baggage with or without check.

Baggage destined for non-agency ports or stations shall be covered by baggage waybill. When baggage is left at such destination Boat Purser or Baggage Man on car shall show disposition of baggage on waybill as follows:

"Left at Northome, Aug. 7, 11:25 AM"

Purser or Baggage Man signing his name and number. Such waybill shall be turned over to the Boat Dispatcher by the Purser or to the Minneapolis Ticket Agent by the Baggage Man on the car, as the case may be.

Boats

To check baggage from a Lake Minnetonka port to any station on the Hopkins, Excelsior, Tonka Bay and Deephaven lines passenger shall present a commutation Rail & Boat ticket for each 150 lbs. of baggage or 10 cent boat tickets in sufficient number to cover boat fare to Excelsior, together with either an all-rail commutation ticket or a single ride 25 cent ticket.

In such cases baggage shall be accepted subject to scale weight at the Minneapolis Ticket Office if destined for Minneapolis or to scale weight on Baggage Car if destined for other stations. All charges for excess baggage must be paid before baggage will be delivered to consignee. If destination is a non-agency station and consignee is not on hand to receive the baggage and pay excess charges, baggage shall be taken to the Minneapolis Ticket Office where it will be held until charges are paid.

Baggage shall be accepted on any regular trip shown on time table except on Sundays, May 30th and July 4th.

Pursers shall examine baggage before accepting same and shall assure themselves that baggage is in good order.

When boats reach Excelsior Docks station baggage shall be turned over to Dock Agent who shall load same in Baggage Car on the next trip of car going to destination.

Pursers shall keep a reasonable supply of baggage checks and Transit Supply Co. tags on hand, anticipating requirements as much as possible.

The express boat Stillwater at the Excelsior dock, sometime after 1910 because the boat has an upper deck canopy. Hennepin County Library collection.

Such checks shall be obtained from the Boat Dispatcher.

Pursers shall anticipate unusual movements of baggage as far as possible and keep the Boat Dispatcher advised relative thereto.

Any baggage damaged or lost shall be reported by Purser on regular accident report and shall be filed with Boat Dispatcher.

Each Purser shall make out a daily baggage report covering such baggage as is handled by him, such report to be turned in to the Boat Dispatcher each day at end of run.

Baggage Car

Only Operating Department officials directly in charge of baggage service, Inspectors or Line Dispatchers when on duty and one representative of the Auditing Department who is provided with a special permit shall be permitted to ride in Baggage Car.

Company material for points reached by the Baggage Car shall be handled free when properly waybilled, tagged and destination given. All other consignments shall be properly waybilled, checked and handled

as express or baggage matter.

Employees in charge of Baggage Car shall handle all material entrusted to them with reasonable care, avoiding loss or damage in transit.

To avoid confusion and delay in unloading, consignments shall be arranged in car in station order.

When baggage is picked up at a station where there is no agent consignor shall offer baggage together with proper transportation. Otherwise baggage shall not be accepted.

Baggage shall be weighed and all excess baggage charges collected before baggage is accepted.

Baggage Man on the car shall keep a reasonable supply of baggage checks and Transit Supply Co. tags on hand, anticipating requirements as far as possible.

Ticket Agents shall notify the Superintendent of all unclaimed baggage on hand over 10 days.

All Company material shall be properly tagged or marked showing destination and for whom intended. It shall be checked in and out, waybilled on Company waybill and receipted for the same as other baggage except that

such shipments need not be weighed.

At Excelsior Docks station Company material shall be promptly moved from point unloaded to dock or boat and when delivered to the one addressed, the waybills shall be receipted and forwarded to the Superintendent in the usual manner.

All waybills covering shipments of Company material shall be marked "D. H. Company material".

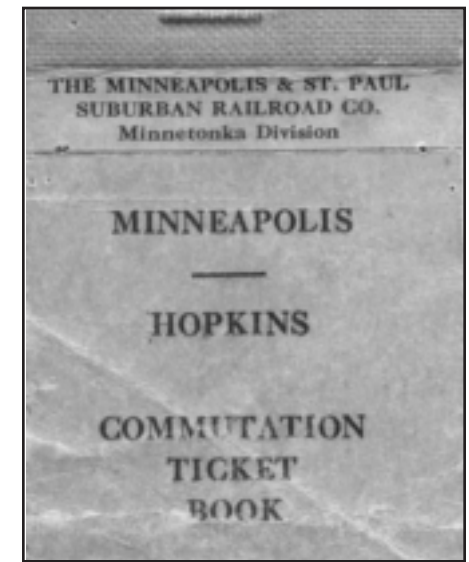
Agents shall make daily abstract to the Superintendent showing duplicate baggage claim checks issued and received for the day, a duplicate copy to be retained for office reference.

Baggage shall be accepted at Minneapolis Ticket Office for checking to points between Grimes and Deephaven Jet. on presentation of Hopkins, Lake Minnetonka or Glen Lake-Tonkawood commutation tickets or Lake Minnetonka one way trip ticket.

Baggage shall be accepted at Minneapolis Ticket Office for checking to points between Grimes and Glen Lake or between Grimes and Tonkawood on presentation of Lake Minnetonka or Glen Lake-Tonkawood commutation tickets or Lake Minnetonka one way trip tickets.

Baggage shall be accepted at Minneapolis Ticket Office for checking to any point served by Baggage Car on presentation—presentation of Lake Minnetonka commutation tickets or Lake Minnetonka one way trip ticket.

Baggage shall be accepted at Minneapolis Ticket Office for checking to any port reached by boats of The Minnetonka & White Bear Navigation Co. upon presentation of Lake Minnetonka Lake & Rail commutation tickets, Lake Minnetonka All Rail commutation tickets together with boat tickets in sufficient number to cover boat fare to destination or Lake



Minnetonka one way trip ticket together with boat tickets in sufficient number to cover transportation to destination.

Before leaving Minneapolis Ticket Office Baggage Man on car shall check all out-going baggage from waybills covering same. When an overage or shortage or other irregularity occurs the Ticket Agent shall promptly notify the Superintendent in writing on regular form of accident report.

Agent shall check all incoming baggage at time of unloading. He must know that each piece is accounted for and when an overage or shortage or other irregularity occurs shall promptly notify the Superintendent in writing on regular form of accident report.

Agent shall make on regular accident report a full report of lost or damaged property and shall forward same with waybill attached to the Superintendent.

At all times when the Baggage Car is left by those in charge to deliver baggage at some point distant from track train doors shall be securely closed.

General Superintendent, 5-2-17.



Baggage car #34 awaiting scrapping at Snelling Shops.

To the ballpark by streetcar

-Aaron Isaacs

From the 1890s until the Great Depression of the 1930s, three urban trends coincided; the growth of American cities, the parallel expansion of their streetcar systems and the passion for the national pastime of baseball. Ballparks were located in the central cities and the public accessed them by streetcar.

According to local sports historian Stew Thornley, the St. Paul Saints and the Minneapolis Millers moved around a lot before they settled into their longtime venues at Lexington Park and Nicollet Park. A characteristic of the pre-1910 period was separate sites for weekday and Sunday games, because of religious opposition to playing on Sunday.

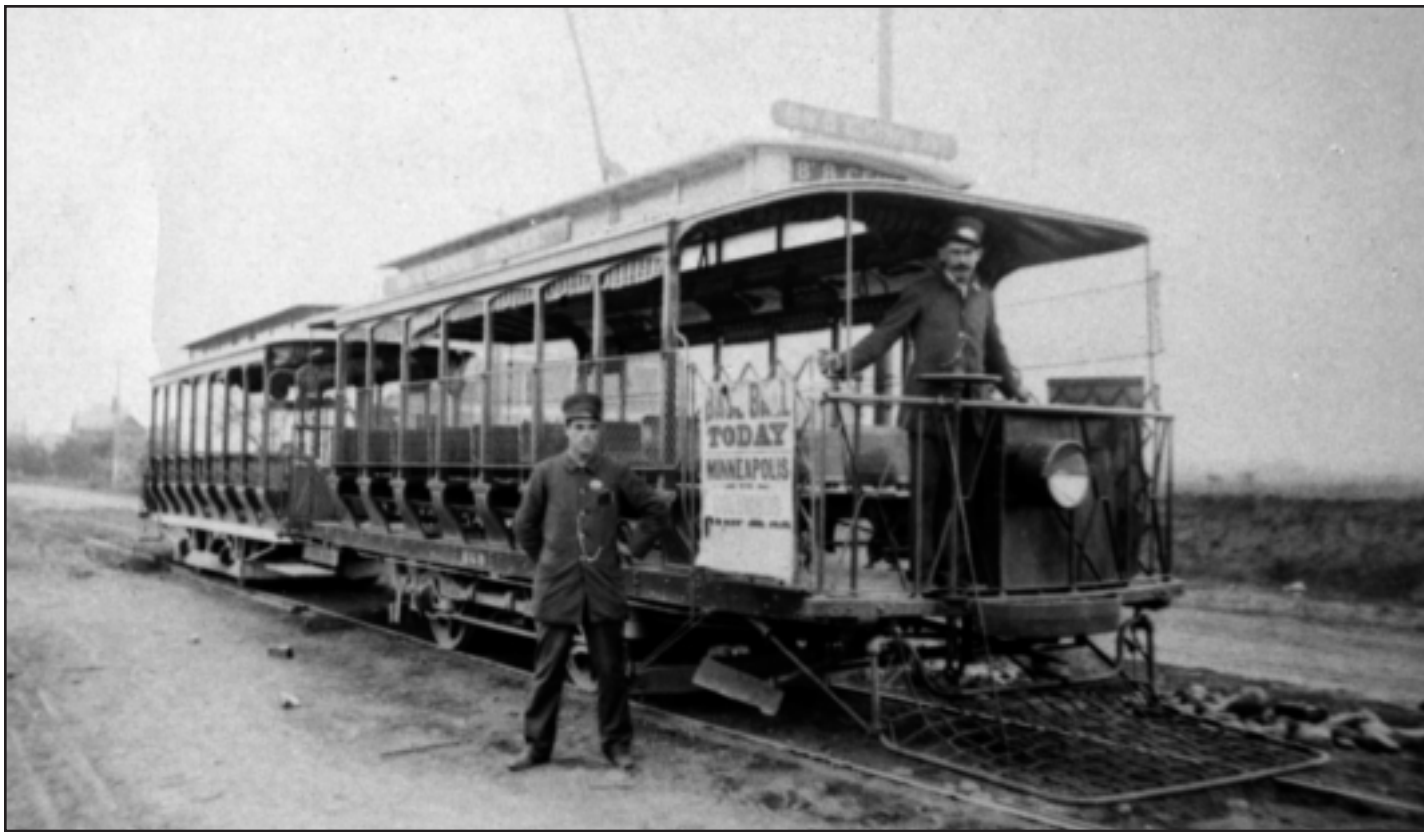
St. Paul

From 1884 to 1895 the Saints played on weekdays at Fort Street Ground, located on West 7th Street at about St. Clair Avenue. 7th Street had been served by horsecars since 1880, then electric cars starting in 1890. There may also have been fans arriving by Milwaukee Road's Murray Hill suburban station, located about a half mile to the west. That also might have been the arrival point for the Minneapolis Millers and their fans. There was no streetcar service connecting Minneapolis and St. Paul until 1890,

Top: University Avenue was unpaved in 1914. Lexington Park is at left, beyond the billboards.

Right: Lexington Park is at lower left. Post-game streetcars were staged at Snelling Station and Shops at upper right. Minnesota Historical Society collection.





The sign on this late-1890s trailer train advertises a Minneapolis Base Ball game.

but there were hourly "short line" trains on the Milwaukee, the Great Northern and the Minneapolis & St. Louis that stopped every mile of two between the Twin Cities.

During that period the Sunday games were played at State Street Athletic Park, just across the river from downtown St. Paul. Horse car service didn't arrive until 1887, but the location had a station stop on the Chicago Great Western's Inver Grove "motor" trains. The ballpark was less than a mile walk from downtown, so many probably arrived on foot.

The weekday games moved in 1895-1896 to the new Dale & Aurora Grounds, near Dale and University. By this time the Interurban was running between Minneapolis and St. Paul via University Avenue. Sunday games stayed at State Street, which now had

electric streetcar service.

Lexington Park opened in 1897 at Lexington and University. Until 1909 Sunday games were held at what was dubbed the "Pillbox", located on the north edge of downtown at 12th and Robert Streets.

It is surprising that no provision was ever made to stage streetcars at Lexington and University for the end of ballgames. Prior to the opening of Snelling Station in 1907, eastbound cars probably started at Midway Station at Raymond & University. Westbound cars would have departed from Smith Avenue Station near downtown or Duluth Avenue Station on East 7th Street.

From 1907 on, Snelling Station was the logical staging point for eastbounds returning to St. Paul, which would have been most of the fans--

except for games against the Minneapolis Millers. We know those drew heavily from Minneapolis, especially the famous holiday "streetcar double headers". What's certain, however, was that the post-game exodus of fans badly disrupted the Interurban for decades.

Minneapolis

From 1886 to 1888 the Millers played at a ballpark at Lake Street and Minnehaha Avenue. 1886 saw horse car service extended to a block away at Lake and 27th Avenue. The Milwaukee Road's South Minneapolis Station was also nearby, with hourly service to and from both downtowns.

In 1889 the Millers moved downtown to Athletic Park, located behind the West Hotel at 6th Street & 1st Ave. N. This was centrally located for tran-

sit access. Sunday games were played at Minnehaha Driving Park, a race-track located at Minnehaha Avenue and 40th Street. There was no direct streetcar access until the electrified Minnehaha Avenue line opened in 1890. However, the Milwaukee Road ran race and ball game extras, stopping at a temporary station nearby.

Nicollet Park at Nicollet and 31st Street opened in 1896, although the Sunday games stayed at Minnehaha Driving Park until 1909. Thornley says the decision to build Nicollet Park was made in consultation with TCRT. Across the street was 31st Street Station (later Nicollet Station), the perfect place to stage streetcars during the game.

The Streetcar Double Headers

Every year on Memorial Day, July 4th and Labor Day, the Millers and Saints played a split double header. The first game started at 10:30 in one city. When completed the fans piled onto the streetcars and headed to the other city for a 3:30 game. It was a fierce rivalry. The two ballparks each held about 10,000 people. It's unclear how many attended both games, but if it was even half, that would require 50 streetcars, and that's assuming 100 jammed in per car. We know from TCRT company records that on July 4, 1916, streetcars transported 3500 fans to the morning game, then another 3500 to the afternoon game. That's at least 35 streetcars for each game and probably more.

When I started writing this article, I speculated on how the fans moved between the ball parks. There was no streetcar line that directly connected



Top: Trailer trains occupy the Nicollet Station yard in the 1920s with the Nicollet Park right field wall across 31st Street.
Bottom: Fans exit Nicollet Park and the streetcars start leaving the yard.
Minnesota Historical Society collection.



the two. Using regular service would have required a transfer in downtown Minneapolis. It seemed more likely that TCRT ran specials directly between the two fields.

If so, what route did they take? The answer differs before and after 1906, when the Selby-Lake line opened between the cities. Before 1906 the only option was the Interurban to downtown Minneapolis, then the Nicollet Avenue line to 31st Street.

After the Selby-Lake line opened in 1906, an alternate, shorter route became available. From Lexington Park, cars could travel west on University to Snelling Station, cut through the station grounds on the west edge of the yard leading to south-bound Snelling Avenue, then west on the Selby-Lake line to Nicollet Avenue. The reverse trip worked the same. But did they use it? TCRT saved money when possible and the Selby routing was almost three miles shorter than traveling through downtown Minneapolis. Probably less congested as well. Since streetcars averaged about 12 mph, the Lake Street routing would have saved about 15 minutes per one-way trip. It would be the difference between a 30-minute and 45-minute one-way trip, well worth doing with a packed standing load.

The answer came unexpectedly on August 3 as I was making working as conductor on our Como-Harriet Line. The motorman was Ted Colburn. For his end-of-line talk he described attending a Millers-Twins holiday double-header with his father as a boy

in 1945. Time travel when you least expect it.

They boarded the Oak-Harriet on Xerxes near his house and transferred at Lake and Hennepin to the Selby-Lake to reach Nicollet Park, home of the Millers. When the game ended, he described the crowd boarding a long line of streetcars parked on Lake Street (I wonder if they weren't actually on Nicollet, having staged in the station yard) for the ride to St. Paul. He remembers getting off within a block of Lexington Park, which means he was on University Avenue, which also means the streetcars took the route as described above. After the game he remembers making the same trip in reverse.

Duluth

The first Duluth ballpark was Recreation Park in 1891, located at 28th Avenue W. and Superior Street. It was apparently more of a simple diamond than a real ball park, but it was served by the West Duluth line, which had opened the year before.

It was replaced in 1903 by Athletic Park on Superior Street just west of the ore docks and several blocks farther on the West Duluth line. It was home to the Duluth White Sox and later the Duluth Dukes. It also hosted football games. In the winter it served as a hockey rink.

In 1907 a spur track was added to accommodate up to eight streetcars and a walkway constructed to the ballpark. After the game, special cars provided direct service to most lines in the system.

Duluth actually fielded a National Football League team in 1923, the Kelleys, renamed the Eskimos in 1926, and they played at Athletic Park.

There was no baseball team from 1907 to 1934 when the Duluth Dukes joined the Northern League.



Duluth's ballpark was located at the end of Superior Street, just west of the ore docks. It was directly served by the West Duluth line, and was only a short walk from the Grand Avenue main line, where the houses are at right center. University of Minnesota Duluth Library collection.

The streetcars quit in 1939. Wade Stadium, still in use today, was built next door to replace Athletic Park in 1941.

Moorhead

-Mark Piehl,
Clay County Historical Society

In 1911 and 1912 a men's clothing store clerk, Russell J. Murray, organized and managed a popular Moorhead amateur team, the Athletics. Early in 1913 he convinced the Moorhead Commercial Club to

partner with him in building a new ball field and grandstand. The Commercial Club purchased a city block, the former home of a brickyard, for little or nothing between Moorhead's 16th and 17th Streets North and 2nd and 3rd Avenue. It was a good location, right on the Fargo-Moorhead Street Railway's streetcar line to Dilworth, MN. The Athletics played their first game on May 11. Newspapers referred to it as the "Athletic field."

With Fargo-Moorhead's entry in the Northern League the following year, F-

M Grain Growers negotiated a contract to use the field. To the best of my knowledge, they played there through the middle of 1917 when war related labor problems forced the League's demise. Lots of other local amateur teams also played at the park. Even after the end of the Northern League, newspapers referred to it as the "league park."

In July 1915 a terrific wind storm caused substantial damage to the fences and backstop. The only still photo we have of this ballpark shows the damage.

Through the mid 1920s a variety of local clubs used the field including a very popular semi-pro team, the Fargo-Moorhead Twins. They played local town teams and barnstorming clubs. In 1927 Fargo businessmen William G. Knowles and Frank Kuhlmeier took over the Twins, signed a five-year lease with the Moorhead Commercial Club and substantially rebuilt the ball park. The Moorhead Daily News, Friday May 6, 1927 described the new place:

"With seating accommodation for 1800 persons and with every seat affording a practically uninterrupted view of the field, the new park will be one of the best in the north west. Entrance to the stand will be through the rear of the grandstand [from the corner of 17th and 2nd Ave N. As in the previous ballpark, the home plate to center field line pointed northwest]. A ticket box is on the left hand of the entrance and a concession stand on the right. The stand is a three-sided affair, with seats for 600 persons directly behind the batter and a similar number for customers on each side of the middle section."

Knowles and Kuhlmeier's contract ran out in February 1932. They flatly refused to renew. The Moorhead Chamber of Commerce (formerly the Commercial Club) owned the land but the Knowles and Kuhlmeier still owned the grandstand and fences. Creditors filed a lien against the buildings. The Moorhead Daily News expressed concern over what might happen to the "only diamond in the two cities capable of handling major contests." The F-M Twins played the first half of the season on the road. In late June the C of C straightened out the park's legal problems, took over ownership of the grandstand and the Twins negotiated a lease for the remainder of the year.



Above: Moorhead's ball park was in open country east of town, served by the trolley line to the Northern Pacific division point of Dilworth. Clay County Historical Society collection.

Top right: "Northern League Base Ball Today" at Oliver Park in Virginia, easily reached by the Mesaba Railway interurbans.

Bottom right: The banner on the car says "Base Ball at Waite Park", and this is the Waite Park car, so it seems likely these folks are headed to the game. It's the early 1890s in St. Cloud. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



Early in 1933 former big leaguer Al Theis proposed a Fargo-Moorhead entry in the resurrected Northern League. Owner, manager, player Theis established the franchise, took over the former F-M Twins' name and some of their better players. In April he inked a contract with the C of C for the use of the field. It may have been the last thing he did right. The highly favored Twins finished the season in last place with a .250 record. Midway through the year the Twins players revolted, took over the team and sent Theis packing.

In 1934 a group of local investors took ownership. They hired Jack Knight as manager who went on to take the 1934 pennant. The Twins played the 1935 season in Moorhead

and began 1936 there as well. But the park had its problems. In a 1995 interview with Concordia College student Ryan Cox, Fargo resident and later F-M Twins player Bob Haas said the park had a dirt infield and no bathroom facilities. Dust covered the spectators and the later made it particularly difficult to get women to attend games.

In mid season 1936 the Twins moved to Barnett Field in north Fargo. The WPA constructed facility was a dramatic improvement over Moorhead's League Park. The streetcar line to Dilworth was abandoned in 1937.



Overhead wire vehicles

Editor's note: Russ Olson found this article on TCRT's tower cars and trucks in the July 19, 1919 issue of the Electric Railway Journal. It fills in gaps in what we previously knew. We've added some photos to our collection, including the first showing horse-drawn tower wagons, so it seemed like the right time to revisit the subject.

In the maintenance and construction of more than 450 miles of overhead system the Twin City Rapid Transit Company uses four automobile tower trucks and four tower cars, half of them in Minneapolis and half in St. Paul. Although the tower equipment

used on various railway systems is similar, this equipment is of particular interest in some details because it is standard throughout and because it was all built by the company.

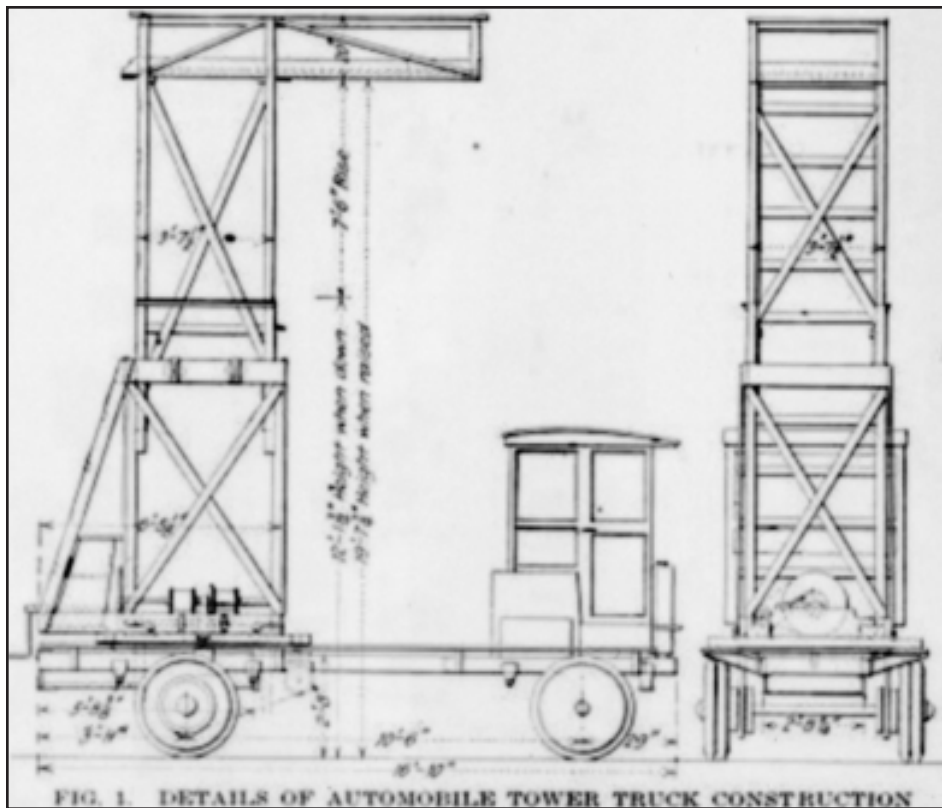
The four automobile tower trucks are each equipped with a 2-ton commercial chassis. Trucks 1, 2 and 3 are each equipped with 35-hp engines while truck 4 has a 45-hp engine and weighs about 2000 lb. more than the other three trucks. The towers are built of wood, fir being used in most parts, steel being used only as bracing in the platform and for the sliding surface of the removable section.

The vertical members are 3-in. x 3 in., cross-braced by 3/4-in. x 3-in. members in the lower section and by 1

1/8-in. x 3-in. members in the upper section. The framework is bolted together with 3/8-in. carriage bolts. The truck body has an overall length of 16 ft. 10 in. About 7 ft. at the rear end of this is taken up by the tower. The

We don't have any further info about the tower wagons, other than they prove that TCRT was using off-track vehicles before 1900.





Above: This drawing accompanied the magazine article.

Right: Here's the 1920s version, outside the University substation and adjacent wire crew carhouse and garage at 2nd Ave. SE and 4th Street.

overall width of the truck is 6 ft. The tower when lowered stands 12 ft. 1 3/4 in. high from the ground and can be raised to a height of 12 ft. 7 3/4 in. The height lowered is limited by the low overhead clearance of some viaducts under which the truck must pass. The tower platform measures 10 ft. x 3 ft. 7 1/2 in. with an overhang of 5 ft. 11 1/2 in.

Main features of towers

One of the main features of the towers is that they are designed for complete rotation at the base. The reason for this is the desire for greater stability

than usually results with rotation of the platform only. The tower is revolved by hand and is held in position by cam levers. It is also raised and lowered by hand, an eight-tooth sprocket on the crank operating a forty-tooth sprocket on the drum axis. This operation is easily accomplished by one man. Details of the tower equipment are shown in the accompanying illustrations.

A supply of tools and small equipment is carried in boxes at the back of the truck while ropes, tackle, larger equipment, 500 ft. of span wire and 200 ft. of trolley wire are hung conve-

niently on hooks on the sides of the tower. The cab is entirely enclosed for cold and inclement weather, although windows on all sides can be lowered when desirable. The trucks are equipped with 4 in. single tires in front and 4-in. dual tires in the rear. The tires give an average of 10,000 miles. The trucks weigh stripped from 6500 to 7100 lb. and the crew comprises three men.

Car towers similar to those on trucks

The towers for the cars are very similar in construction to those on the trucks. While the auto tower measures about 4 ft. square, the tower on the cars is about 4 ft. wide by 6 ft. long. It is also not quite as high, either lowered or raised, as is the auto tower and has a

little greater overhang. The rotation feature is the same as already described. The arrangement for lowering and raising these towers is similar, with the exception that one tower is equipped with a three-cylinder air motor for air operations.

The capacity for tools on the cars is more extensive than on the trucks. On one side of the cab is a work bench with vise, etc., and on the other a series of pockets or bins containing all kinds of small supplies. The cars are also equipped with a reel of approximately 1 mile of trolley wire mounted on a rack or wench equipped with a brake.

The tower cars were built entirely by the company. The trucks are standard Twin City equipped with 4 GE-57 motors geared for a speed of 45 mph.



By means of a series-multiple switch the four motors can be operated on a series in the city and when stringing trolley wire giving a speed of about 4 mph on the first notch of series. The controller is General Electric K-14. The floor framing is 4-in. x 6-in. yellow pine, reinforced by 6-in. pine channels for the side sills. The flooring is 2-in. pine. The length over the bumper is 40 ft., the width 7 ft. 8 in., the cab is 10 ft. long and the height from top of rail to top of cab is 11 ft. 4 in.

On construction work the trolley wire is strung alive and furnishes energy to the motors of the car by a unique device as shown. The end of the reel is attached to the overhead at the starting point. By means of a hook over the trolley wheel an auxiliary wheel is suspended and the new wire being strung passes through this wheel and over a roller on the front of the lower platform. Thus the energy for operation is furnished through the new wire being taken from the reel. Four men with this equipment can take down and reel up 1 mile of old trolley wire and string the same amount of new wire in four hours.

The auto towers are used on emergency work and for small maintenance and construction, as they can be located beside the track with no interruption to traffic. The cars, however, are generally used on any work over two spans in length and where traffic is light.

The equipment has proved of great assistance in carrying on the maintenance work of the system and its operating cost has been very low.



The wire trucks evolved over time, with hydraulic platform lifts becoming the norm.





Above: The wire cars were originally had the tower amidships, like #3 on Excelsior's Water Street, but raising it required reversing the trolley pole. Darel Leipold collection.
Below: The problem was solved by moving the tower over the rear truck. Car #72 is at Snelling Station.

Lower left: This rear view of #4 at Duluth Station shows the tower mounted on a turntable, allowing it to swivel.



"Free" Ride?



Well, hardly. This is about the most costly trip any one can take . . . an extra expense you can easily avoid by riding Street Cars and Buses.

RIDE STREET CARS and BUSES . . . ENJOY SPENDING THE DIFFERENCE!




When a battery "goes dead"—as it has a habit of doing—there is nothing else to do but call a garage to install a rental battery and recharge the other. And then the expense starts!

But there is an easy way to stop this unnecessary increase in your automobile "transportation cost"...ride Street Cars and Buses!

RIDE STREET CARS and BUSES...ENJOY SPENDING THE DIFFERENCE!



In an attempt to counter declining ridership due to automobile competition, TCRT began advertising in the 1920s. It didn't do much good, as ridership declined 28 percent that decade, then really dropped during the 1930s. Judging by the cars, these ads are mid- to late 1930s.



This is only the second photo we've ever seen of the short-lived American Traction Company. It ran a 6.75-mile route that connected International Falls with the neighboring town of Ranier. Service started in 1916 and apparently only last a year or two. Overhead wire was never strung. According to Russ Olson's research, it tried a gas-mechanical car, then a battery powered car.



A southbound Minnehaha Falls shortline car (at left) was headed straight ahead at the 42nd & Minnehaha junction. It was T-boned by a long line car from Fort Snelling, about to turn onto Minnehaha Avenue from 42nd Avenue. As shortlines weren't that common, the northbound motorman probably assumed the other cars was turning onto 42nd. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo.



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